

BRITISH MUSEUM  
A SHORT GUIDE  
TO THE  
AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES  
IN THE  
BRITISH MUSEUM

WITH 12 PLATES AND 48 ILLUSTRATIONS

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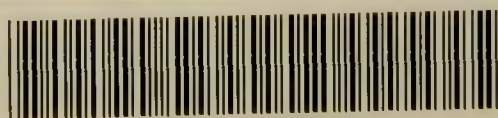
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## PREFACE

THE present guide deals only with those examples of native American industry and art which may be separated, as antiquities, from the work of modern tribes. The greater part has been obtained from excavations; of others, such as the Mexican mosaics, the history has been known for some centuries. But the great antiquity of many of the objects in the room is by no means certain. Some of them, for instance the stone arrow-points of the Plains Indians, though recovered by excavation, may well be no more ancient than the similar arrow-points used by the Indians of fifty or a hundred years ago. It is therefore rather on practical than on scientific grounds that the American collections are divided into two portions.

The collection is remarkable chiefly for the unrivalled series of Mexican mosaics, for the wood-carvings from the Macabi Islands, and for the highly artistic Peruvian pottery from the Chicama valley.

The Trustees are indebted to the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute for the loan of the following blocks: Figs. 31, 32, 43, 44, 47, Pl. X, Pl. XI, and Pl. XII.

This brief guide has been prepared by Mr. T. A. Joyce, Assistant in the Department.

C. H. READ, KEEPER,  
DEPARTMENT OF BRITISH AND MEDIAEVAL ANTIQUITIES  
AND ETHNOGRAPHY.

*May, 1912.*



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# A SHORT GUIDE TO THE AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

## NORTH AMERICA.

THE archaeology of the North American Continent is represented in the British Museum by a comparatively small series of objects from Canada and the United States east of the Rocky Mountains. The inhabitants of this area fall roughly into two main groups, Plains Indians and Pueblo Indians. The Pueblo Indians were agriculturists living in large agglomerations of dwellings (*pueblos* = Sp. 'villages'), built of sandstone, or in eaves reinforced with architecture. Their modern representatives are confined in the main to Arizona and New Mexico, but in former times they extended into Utah and Colorado. The Plains Indians in early times also practised agriculture as well as hunting, until the introduction of the horse by Europeans induced them to adopt a more nomadic existence.

The antiquity of man in North America is a vexed question; skulls have been found which have been ascribed to a very early geological period, but their authenticity is in the highest degree doubtful. Stone implements of palaeolithic appearance have been found in the Trenton gravels, but in no case has a palaeolithic age comparable to that of Europe been established for North America. For all practical purposes the tribes were living in an age of stone at the time of their discovery; copper indeed was known and worked by hammering, but was used only in small quantities and principally for ornament (see the shell necklace with copper pendant in case E; fig. 1). In the manufacture of flaked implements the North Americans were very expert, some of their products being equal in quality to those of ancient Denmark. Objects of polished stone are

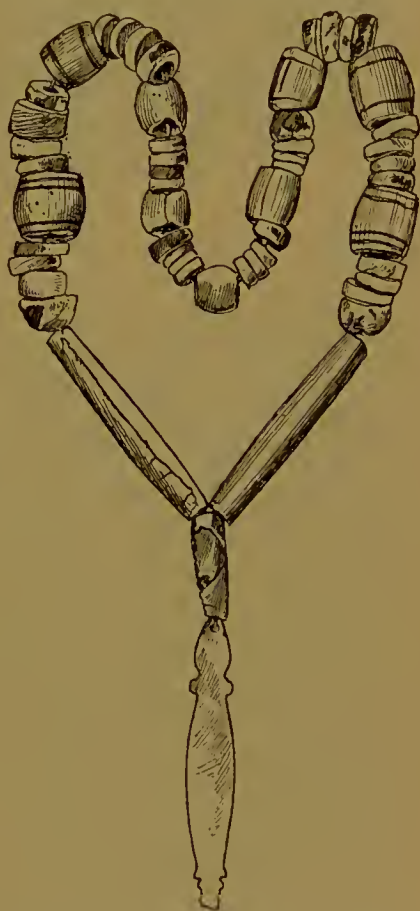


FIG. 1. NORTH AMERICA. Necklace of shell, bone, and copper, West Virginia. ( $\frac{1}{3}$ .)



common, and many of these, notably the pipe-bowls (case E), exhibit great technical skill. A stone pendant in the form of a bird's head from a mound in Florida, in the same case, displays artistic qualities of no mean order (fig. 2). Many objects of this class are found in artificial mounds. These mounds, which are confined practically to the Mississippi basin and the Gulf states, are occasionally in animal form, and have been supposed to be the handiwork of a people of higher culture, but it has now been proved that they were erected by the ancestors of the tribes found in the locality by the European discoverers. The stone implements in cases 30-7 show considerable similarity, and it will be sufficient to call attention to the quartz arrow-heads from Georgia, the hoe-blades from Arkansas and Missouri, the minute arrow-heads from Arizona, the obsidian implements



FIG. 2. FLORIDA. Stone pendant, from a mound ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ).

from Arizona and California, and the heavy pestles and rubbers from California. In table-case E are a number of the enigmatical objects called variously 'gorgets', 'banner-stones', 'bird-stones', and the like, the uses of which are still problematical. Shell implements have been found in great numbers in Florida (case E), and finely engraved shell disks (same case) occur further north. The Plains Indians made fairly good pottery by the coiling process; the vases were built up by hand, and were often given an anthropomorphic form or provided with engraved and, less commonly, painted decoration. Specimens from Illinois and Arkansas, some varnished, are exhibited in cases 32, 34, 35. But finer pottery was manufactured, in the same manner, by the Pueblo tribes; in these vases the coils were sometimes made to perform an ornamental function, or painted decoration in black and white, and often red, was added. Unfortunately the Museum possesses only one or two examples (case 36). The most artistic pottery, however (no specimens in this collection), comes from Florida, where spiral designs, strongly recalling those on Mycenaean ware, are often found engraved on the vases.

Other objects of interest are the tale sheets, cut in ornamental forms and probably used for decorating garments, and the specimens of ancient wampum, both exhibited in case E.

Mosaic work, of shell, turquoise, and jet, was manufactured in Arizona and New Mexico, but is unrepresented in the Museum collection.





*a*

*a.* A priest making a blood-offering before a god ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ).



*b*

*b.* The god Cuculcan and a priest ( $\frac{1}{1}$ ).

PLATE I. MEXICO. Stone reliefs from Maya ruins at Menché, Tabasco.



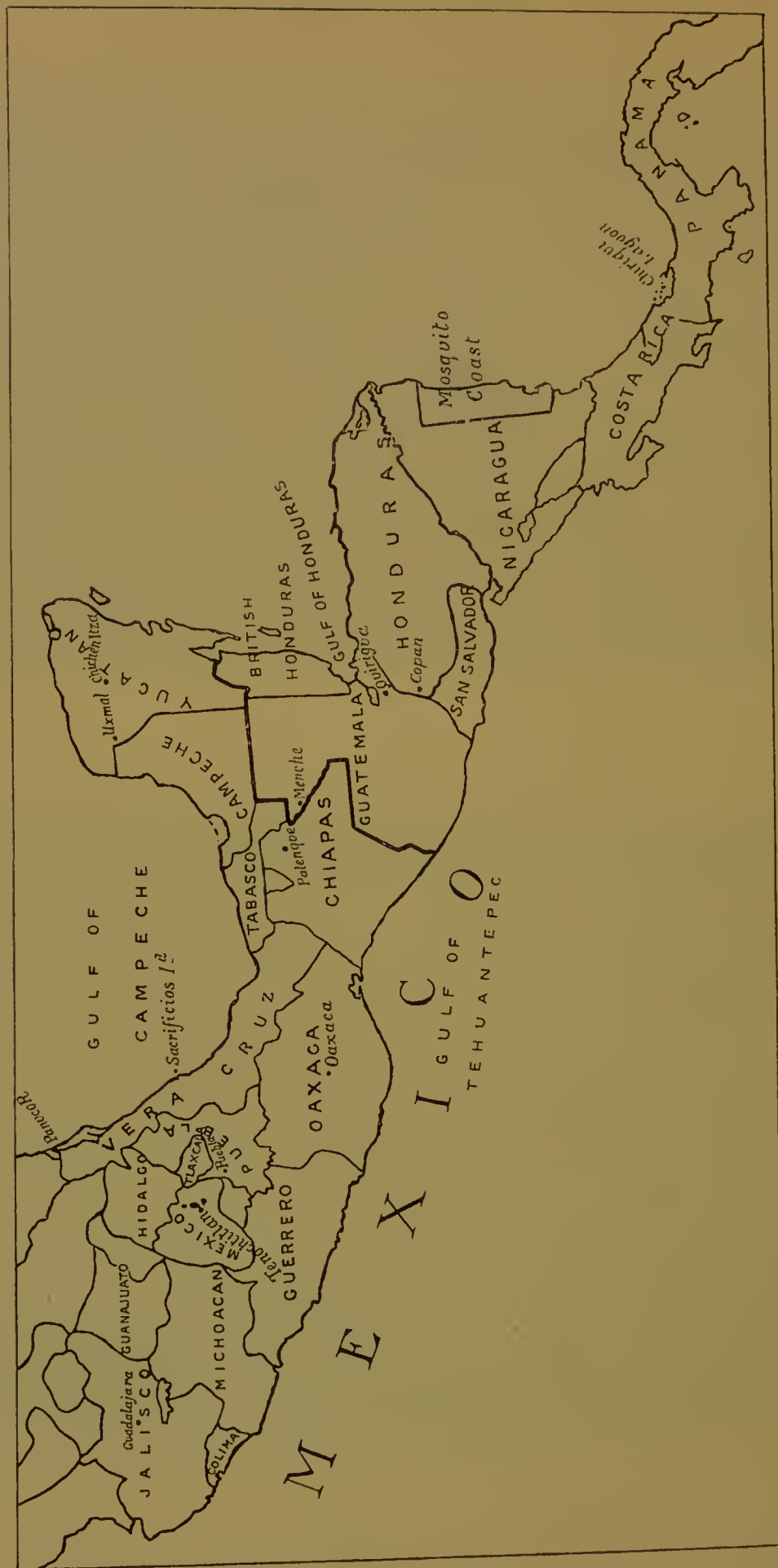


FIG. 3. MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA.



## MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA.

THE region comprising the modern states of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama, may be treated together, in so far as traces of what may be regarded as a single culture are found throughout, though these traces are but few and slight south of Honduras. Mexico consists of a broad and fertile table-land, temperate in climate, bordered on either side by a tropical coast-line; the mountain-chains which confine this table-land join one another at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, but open out again in Honduras and Nicaragua to form another plateau before reuniting in Costa Rica, where their altitude begins to diminish.

At the time of the discovery, the most important political centre was the Valley of Mexico, where the Aztec of Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) had recently acquired the leadership of a confederation of widespread influence. The Aztec were comparatively late-comers in the Mexican valley, whither they had been preceded by a number of related tribes, all coming from the north, and constituting a group known as Nahua, akin to the Pueblo Indians. The relation of the Nahua tribes to the Maya people of Yucatan, Chiapas, Guatemala, and Honduras is a difficult question, but recent researches would seem to show that the culture of the Aztec and other Nahua was borrowed almost entirely from the Maya. Indeed, it is not improbable that the Maya in very early times occupied a great portion of the Mexican plateau, and that the remains of Cholula and Teotihuacan, close to Mexico City, are due in part to them. The first Nahua invaders, the Toltec of Tula, the Olmec, the Totonac of Vera Cruz, and the Zapotec and Miztec of Oaxaca, borrowed wholesale from the culture of the Maya but gradually drove the latter eastward and southward, giving rise to migrations, such as that of the Kakchiquel of Guatemala, who had in their turn imported into their own religion some of the more gruesome practices of the Nahua. In the course of the tribal movements to which the Nahua immigration gave rise, a primitive branch of the Maya, the Huastec, were isolated on the river Panuco in northern Vera Cruz. Later pressure from the Nahua led to the Maya occupation of Yucatan, while Nahua tribes made their way along the isthmus into Nicaragua and Costa Rica as far as the Chiriqui lagoon.

The early Nahua seem to have made their immigration under the leadership of their priests, but after their settlement on the Mexican plateau the continual intertribal strife which ensued led to the rise of a



feudal military nobility, who were eventually able to seize the temporal power. The early history is that of the rise and fall of several confederations; the Chichimec domination, with its centre at Tenayocan, gave place to that of the Colhua, first at Colhuacan, later at Tezcuco, and this was supplanted in its turn by that of the Teepance of Atzeaputzalco.



FIG. 4. MEXICO. 1-7, Scrapers and flakes of obsidian; 8, 9, Stone knife-blades. ( $\frac{2}{3}$ .)

In the continual wars of this period, the Aztec, as yet of small political importance, had been sought as allies owing to their prowess as fighters, and were always ready to sell their services to the highest bidder. But their turn came at last, after their final settlement at Tenochtitlan, when, aided by the people of Tezcuco and Tlacopan, they overthrew the Teepance and formed a confederacy which was still dominant when the Spaniards entered Mexico.





*a*



*b*



*c*

PLATE II. *a*. HONDURAS. Stone figure of a singing-girl, Copan ( $\frac{1}{7}$ ). *b*. MEXICO. Stone 'altar', Puebla ( $\frac{1}{7}$ ). *c*. MEXICO. Stone figure; Huastec, Panuco River ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ).



The Mexicans and Central Americans knew and worked gold, silver, and copper (bronze), but, like the tribes north of them, they were, for all practical purposes, living in an age of stone. Very few copper implements have been found, and it seems probable that this metal was rarely used

except in the manufacture of ornaments. In working gold the Mexicans were very expert; the metal was plentiful, and the ornaments and utensils collected by the conquerors moved the admiration of the goldsmiths in Spain. Unhappily, few objects in the precious metal have survived (two gold ornaments are exhibited in the Room of Gold Ornaments and Gems).

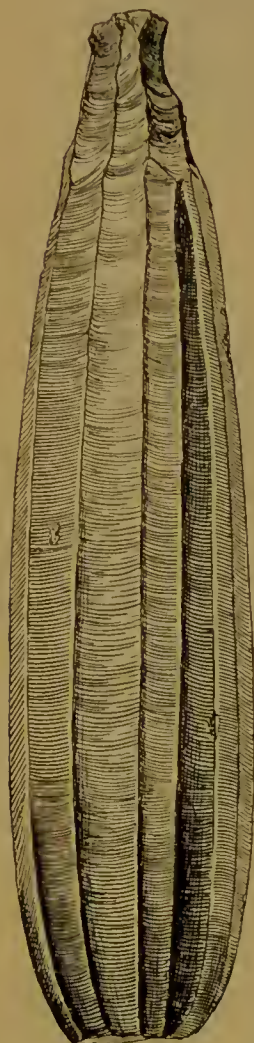


FIG. 5. MEXICO. Obsidian core from which flakes have been struck ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ).

In the manufacture of flaked stone implements (figs. 4 and 6) the Mexicans and Central Americans excelled, and many of their spear-heads and knife-blades (case B and exhibition drawers) are surpassed only by those of the ancient Egyptians, while their celts of polished stone exhibit a corresponding degree of perfection (same table-case and fig. 7). Long flakes of obsidian (drawers in case B and fig. 4. 3-5) were used for shaving and cutting the hair, or were set in wooden swords to furnish a cutting edge. From the same material were made large mirrors (cases B and L) and various personal ornaments, such as studs for the ears and lips (exhibition-drawer, case B). More ambitious works of art were masks of obsidian, and various kinds of hard stone, of which a number of remarkably fine specimens, including a life-size skull of solid rock-crystal (Pl. VI. *g*), is exhibited in standard-case L. Stone was used for building, and in this respect the Maya surpassed the Aztec. The sites of Palenque (Chiapas), Menché and Quirigua (Guatemala), Copan (Honduras), Chichen Itza and Uxmal (Yucatan), to mention only a few, are marked by buildings which are not only solidly

constructed, but ornamented with elaborate reliefs of considerable beauty, bearing witness to technical skill of a high order (see carved slabs on landing and figures over cases 17-24 and Pl. I). In the construction of these there is evidence to show that only stone tools were used. Ignorance of two vital architectural points, the principle of the arch, and of bonding the corners of buildings, told heavily against the Central American mason.

A good series of the ruder sculptures of the Huastec is exhibited over cases 32-7 and 5-16, on either side of the doors, and on the landing (Pl. II. *c*); while special attention should be called to the





*a*



*b*



*c*



*d*

PLATE III. MEXICO. *a* and *c*. Stone figure of Quetzalcoatl (1). *b* and *d*. Stone figure of Chalchiuhtlicue ( $\frac{3}{10}$ ).



magnificent stone snake also on the landing immediately outside the door (Pl. V. *e*).

In the matter of religion there was considerable difference between the Aztec and Maya; the Aztec gods, or rather such of them as were of supreme importance at the time of the conquest, were dark and terrible divinities, to be propitiated with numberless human offerings. Such were Tezcatlipoca, a sun- and fire-god, Huitzilopochtli, god of war, and Tlaloc the

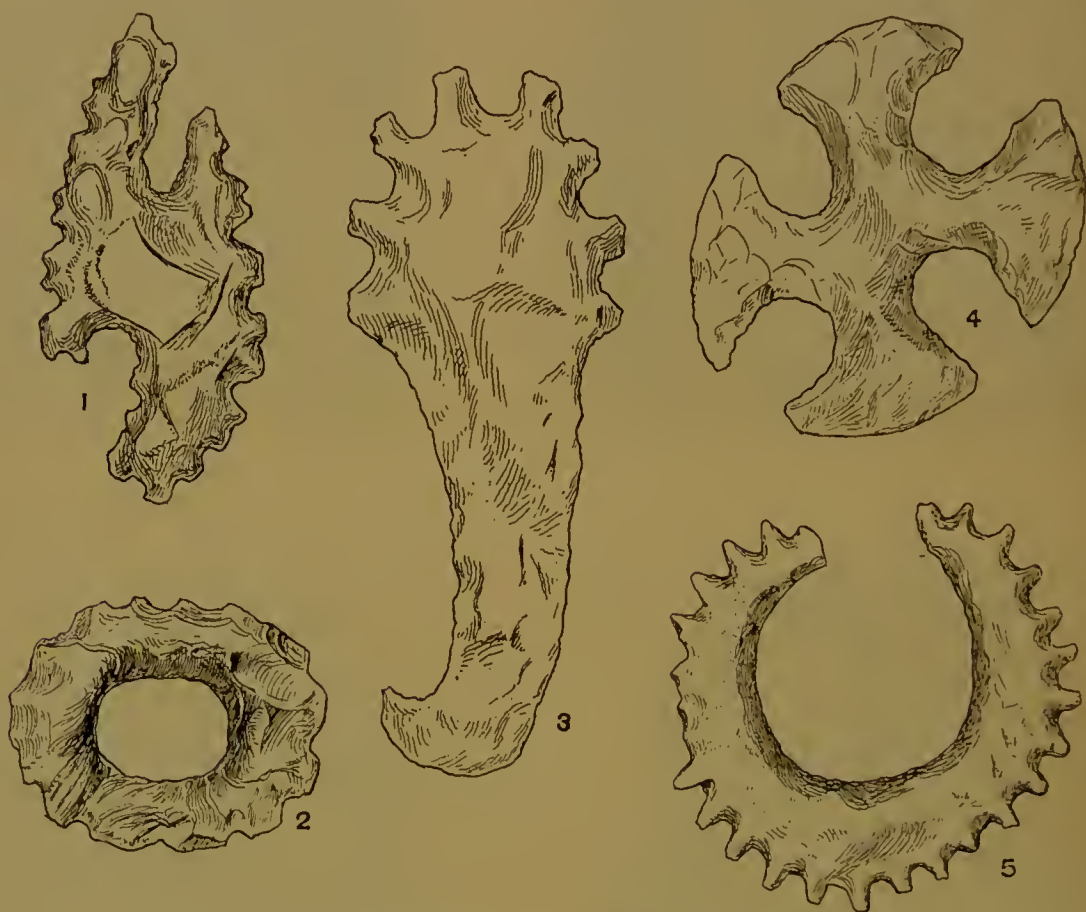


FIG. 6. BRITISH HONDURAS. Objects of flaked stone ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ).

rain-god. An interesting point about the large pantheon of the Aztec is the number of deities connected with fertility and agriculture, such as Centeotl, goddess of the maize, Xotchiquetzal, goddess of flowers, and Chalchiuhtlicue (of whom there are two beautiful stone figures in case 3; see Pl. III. *b* and *d*), goddess of water. One god indeed there was who did not rejoice in human sacrifice, Quetzalcoatl, whose emblem was the feathered snake, and who is represented in legend as a culture-hero. But Quetzalcoatl was a deity borrowed from the Maya; his name is a translation of the Maya Cuculcan, or Gucumatz, and human sacrifice was never, or only in the rarest cases, required by the Maya gods, who were satisfied with dogs and birds as victims. Human blood indeed was offered to them, but it was drawn from the ears or tongue of the worshipper. In the





a



b



c

PLATE IV. MEXICO.    a, b. Jadeite figurine.    c. Alabaster vase, Sacrificios Island, ( $\frac{4}{7}$ .)



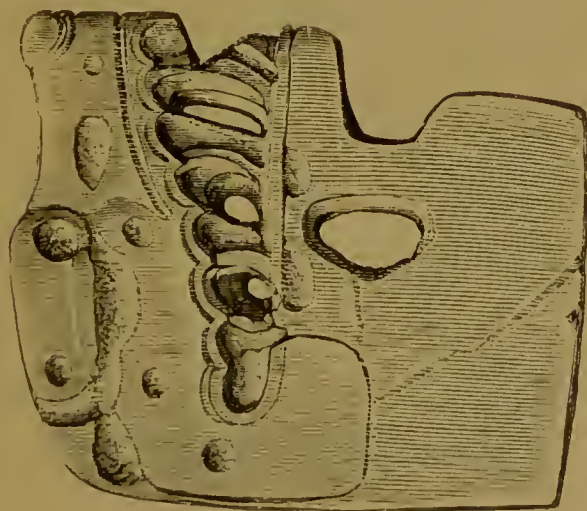
relief, Pl. I. *a*, a priest is shown before the figure of a god, scarifying his tongue with a cord to which thorns are attached, and in Pl. I. *b* another priest, kneeling before Cuculean, holds a basket containing the implements for piercing the ears. The Aztec also offered blood in the same way, and the beautiful jadeite dagger in case L (fig. 11) was probably used for drawing the blood ceremonially from the ear. A fine figure of Quetzalcoatl



FIG. 7. MEXICO. Stone ceremonial axe.

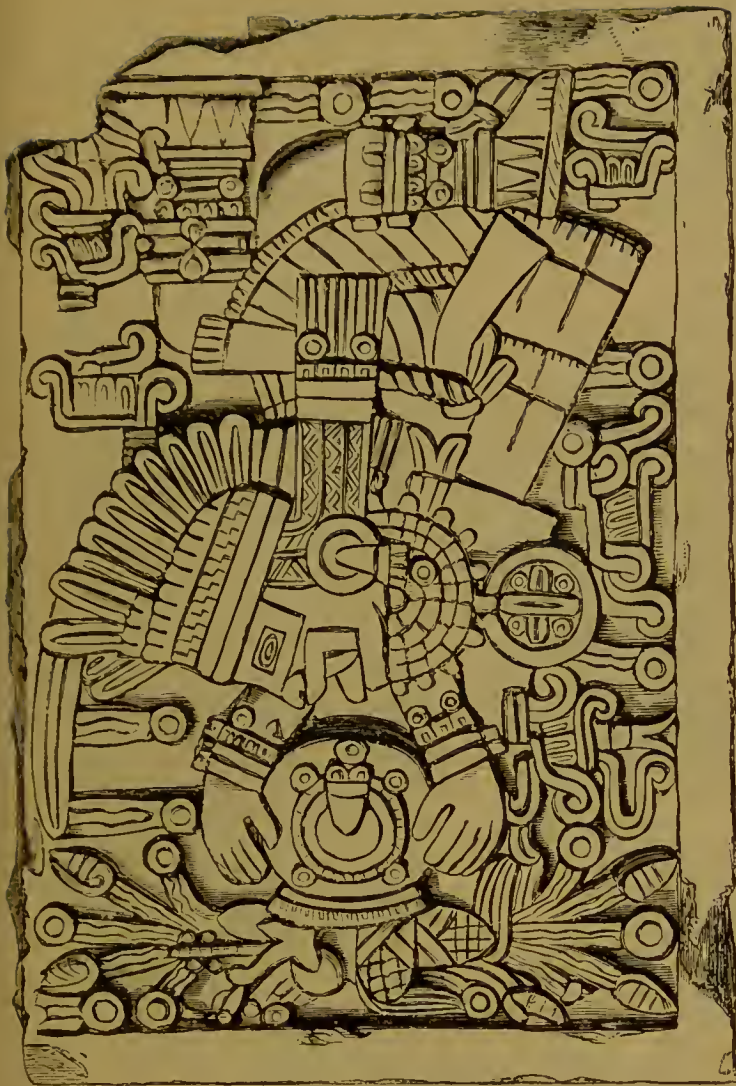
is shown in case 3 (Pl. III. *a* and *c*), and the two mosaic masks in case L again represent him (fig. 13), while the skull-mask in the same case, also ornamented with mosaic, probably represents Tezeatlipoca (fig. 12). These mosaics, together with the others in the case, form the largest series in existence, and most, if not all, were among those objects of indigenous art sent by Cortez to the Emperor Charles V. In the same case are two fine basalt masks of Xipe, a form of Huitzilopochtli, represented with open mouth and closed eyes, and suggesting the flayed skin of the victim in which the priest clad himself (fig. 18). Religion played so large a part in the life of the Central Americans that the regulation of the varied



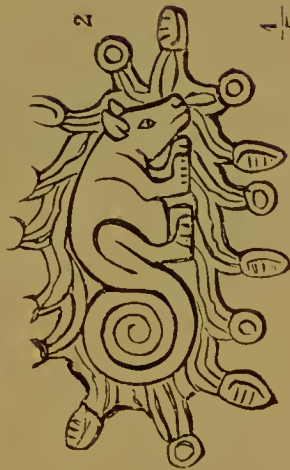


$\frac{1}{4}$

FIG. 8. GUATEMALA. Stone ceremonial axe.



1



2

$\frac{1}{5}$

FIG. 9. MEXICO. Stone casket. 1. Figure of god holding vase carved on outside. 2. Figure of the animal *antilope* carved inside.



ceremonial had grown to be a matter of vital and national importance. Years of observation had resulted in the adoption by the Maya of a calendar system which included a secular year of 365 days and a ritual year of 260 days. This had been borrowed by the Nahuatl. But the former people also reckoned far longer periods of time, based on multiples of 360

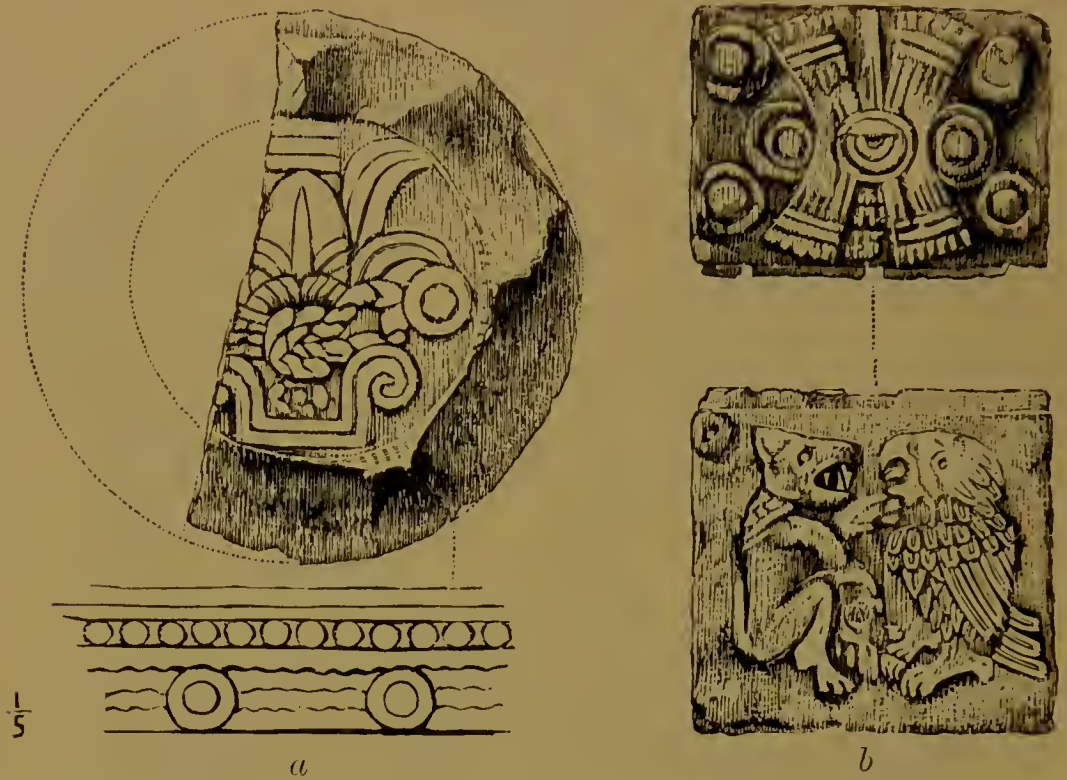


FIG. 10. MEXICO. *a*. Stone disk carved with the sign *acall*. *b*. Stone block with the sign *olin*, and the figures of an ocelot and an eagle in relief.

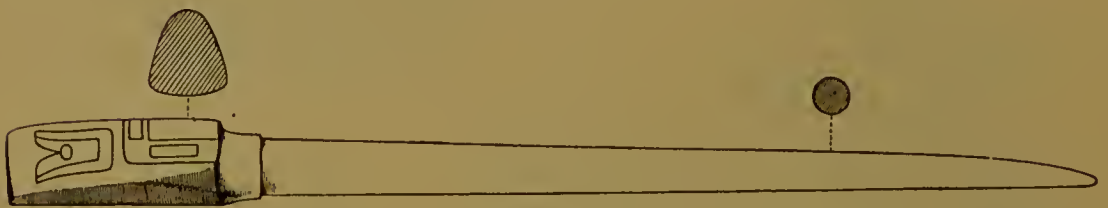


FIG. 11. MEXICO. Jadeite implement.

days, and the necessity of making long and involved calculations had resulted, except among the Huastec, in the evolution of a hieroglyphic script, of which the characters were, at any rate partly, phonetic. The Aztec and Zapotec also made use of hieroglyphs, but their script had not passed the ideographic stage. Examples of Maya glyphs are seen on the reliefs on the landing (see also fig. 19). It is an interesting fact that by far the larger proportion of the dates found on Maya monuments in Chiapas, Guatemala, Honduras, and Yucatan are reckoned from a definite day of





*a*



*b*



*c*



*d*



*e*

PLATE V. MEXICO. *a*. Wooden gong ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ). *b-d*. Zapotec pottery, Oaxaca ( $\frac{1}{16}$ ).  
*e*. Stone rattlesnake ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ).



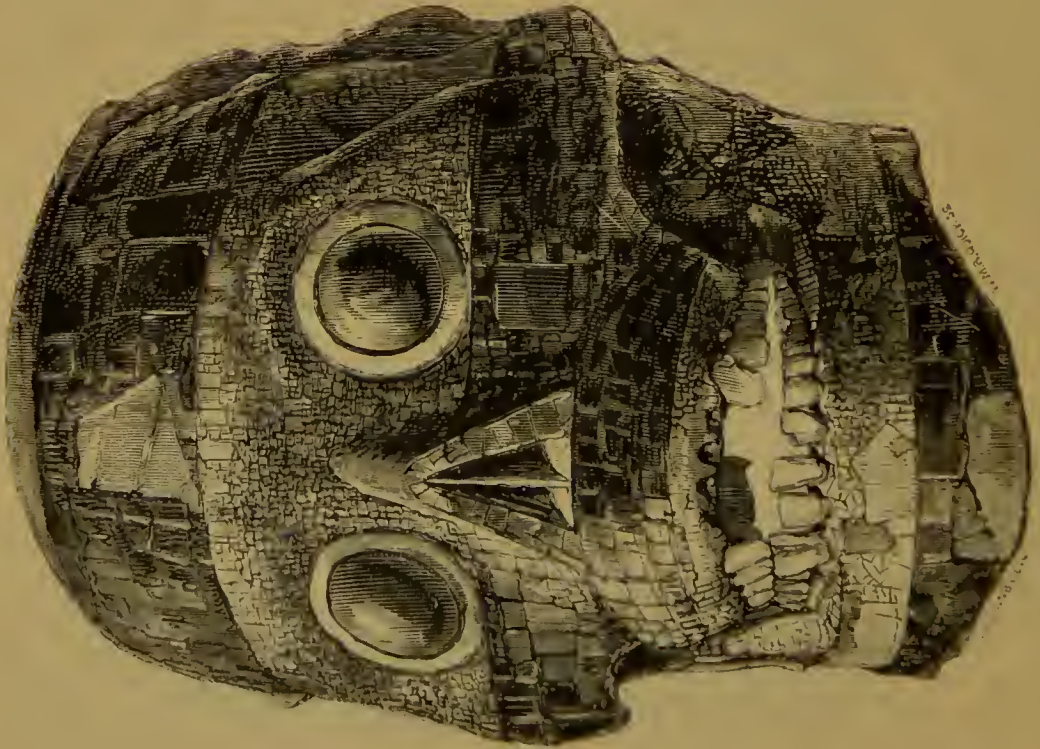


FIG. 12. MEXICO. Human skull encrusted with mosaic, representing Tezcatlipoca.

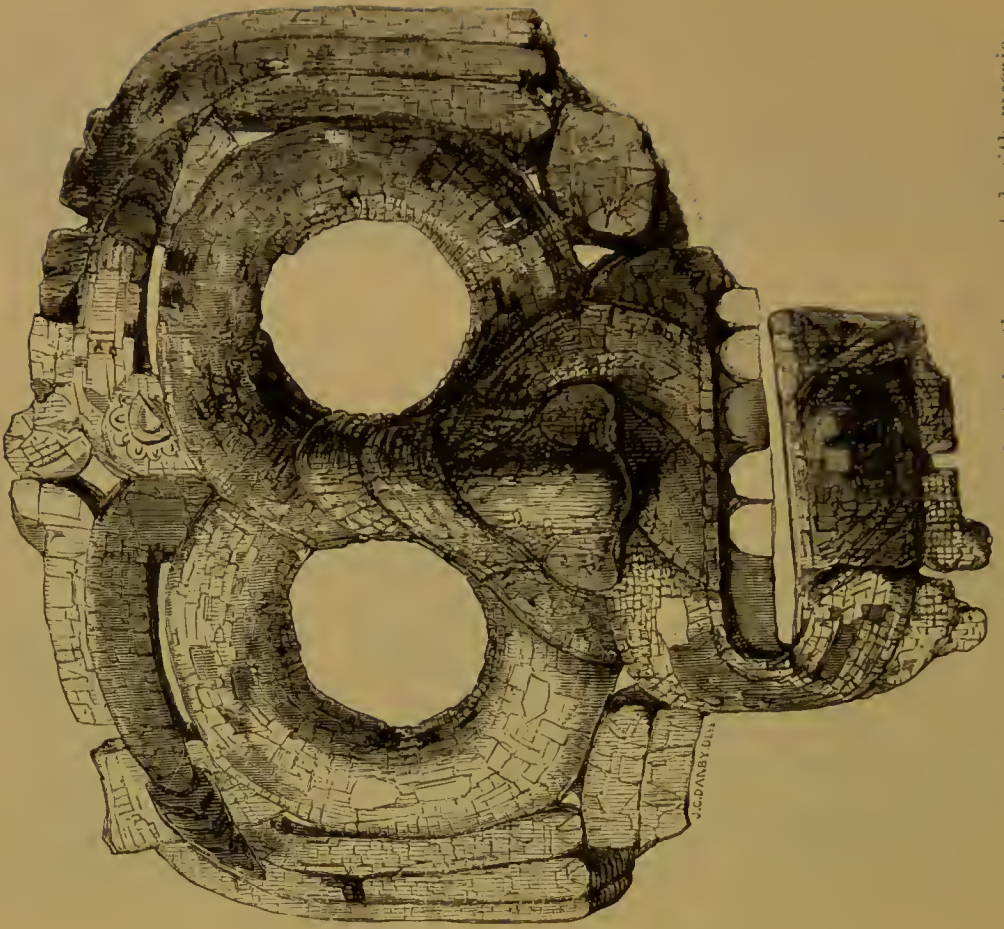


FIG. 13. Mexico. Wooden mask of Quetzalcoatl, encrusted with mosaic.



a definite year in the past which is the same in all cases. Beyond the dates, the inscriptions cannot yet be interpreted, and there is little hope that they will be found to contain historical details; in fact, it is almost



FIG. 14. MEXICO. Wooden breast-ornament, encrusted with mosaic.



FIG. 15. MEXICO. Small wooden head, encrusted with mosaic.

certain that they must refer solely to matters connected with ritual. Aztec, Zapotec, and Maya alike wrote manuscripts on parchment or paper (made from the fibre of the *maguey*); an Aztec manuscript in facsimile is exhibited in case A, and may be contrasted with the Maya form of picture-writing. Probably connected with religion, but of unknown use, were the remark-





FIG. 16. MEXICO. Stone-bladed knife, with wooden handle encrusted with mosaic.



able stone 'yokes', of which two are shown in case 6 (fig. 21); while drums and wooden gongs (*teponaztli*) were used in most religious ceremonies; two of the latter are exhibited in case 3 (Pl. V. *a* and fig. 22).

In war the Mexicans made use of swords edged with obsidian, bows, and spears, which they hurled by means of spear-throwers called *atlatl*. A fine specimen of the last named, probably for ceremonial use, is exhibited in case L (fig. 23). Helmets, shields, and quilted tunics formed their defensive armour, and feather-crests and mantles completed their equipment.



FIG. 17. MEXICO. Design on wooden shield, encrusted with mosaic.

A wooden helmet decorated with mosaic is shown in case L, together with the centre-piece of a shield similarly ornamented (fig. 17).

A large proportion of the remains consists of the pottery, of which a fairly representative series is shown in cases 1-13. The pottery, as everywhere else in America, was made by hand, without the aid of a wheel, and in places attained a high standard. One well-marked type is represented by the ware of Guadalajara (cases 1 and 2), which is, however, inferior in technique and ornamentation to the finely-burnished and painted pottery of Puebla (a few specimens in case 4). A good collection of the Zapotec funerary vases from Oaxaca may be seen in case 5 (Pl. V. *b-d*); one of which represents the bat-god, while the rest are remarkably well





FIG. 18. MEXICO. Stone mask representing the god Xipe.





FIG. 19. GUATEMALA. Wooden lintel with Maya hieroglyphs, Tikal.



FIG. 20. GUATEMALA. Wooden lintel with Maya carving, Tikal.



modelled in human form, and supply interesting details regarding costume and ornaments. A fine series of vases from the island of Sacrificios, sacred to Quetzalcoatl, is shown in cases 6-8 (Pl. VI. *a-f*), and is especially worthy

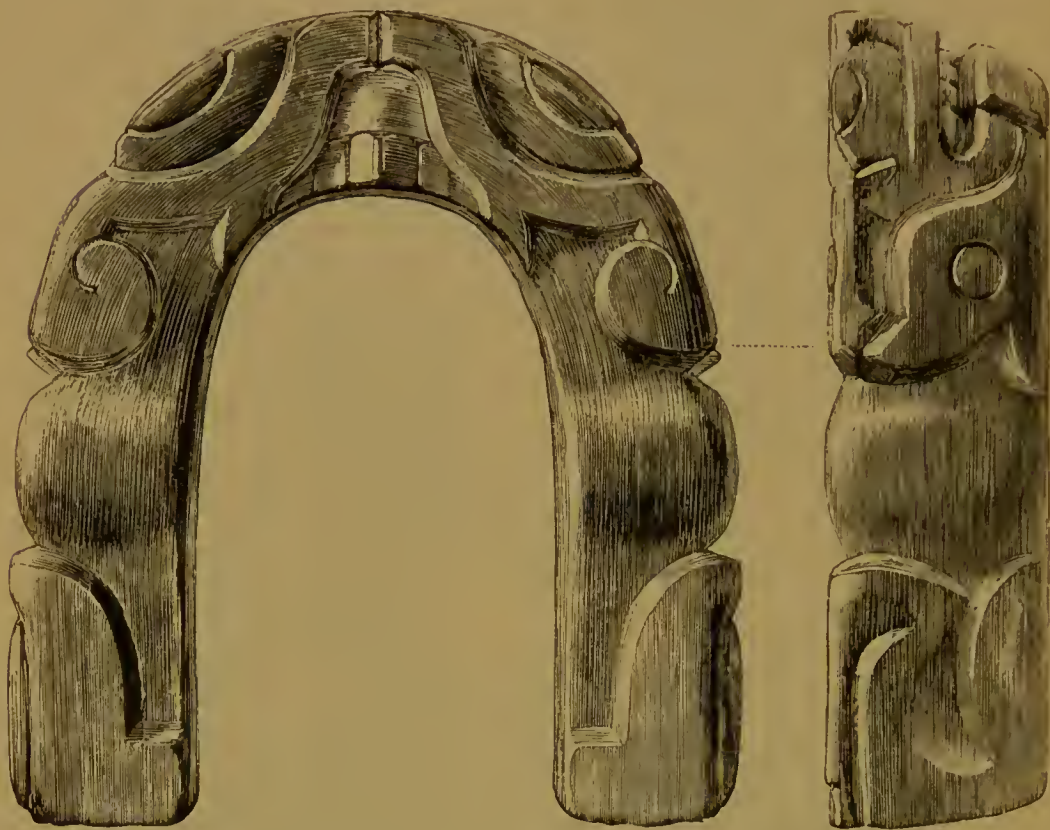


FIG. 21. MEXICO. Stone ceremonial carving.

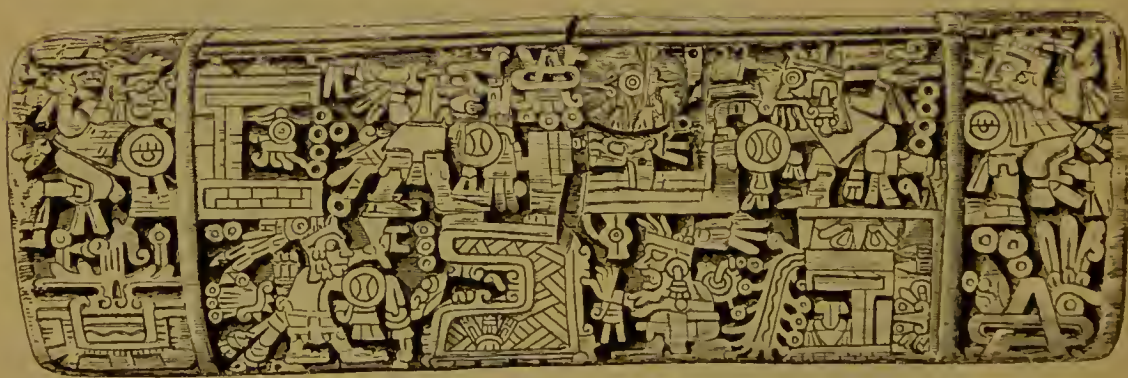


FIG. 22. MEXICO. Wooden gong with designs in relief ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ).

of notice on account of the admirable forms in which the vessels are modelled, and of the high artistic quality of their painted decoration. From the same locality are the interesting alabaster vases in case 4 (Pl. IV. *c*). Maya pottery from Guatemala is exhibited in case 9, and a larger series from British Honduras in case 10.



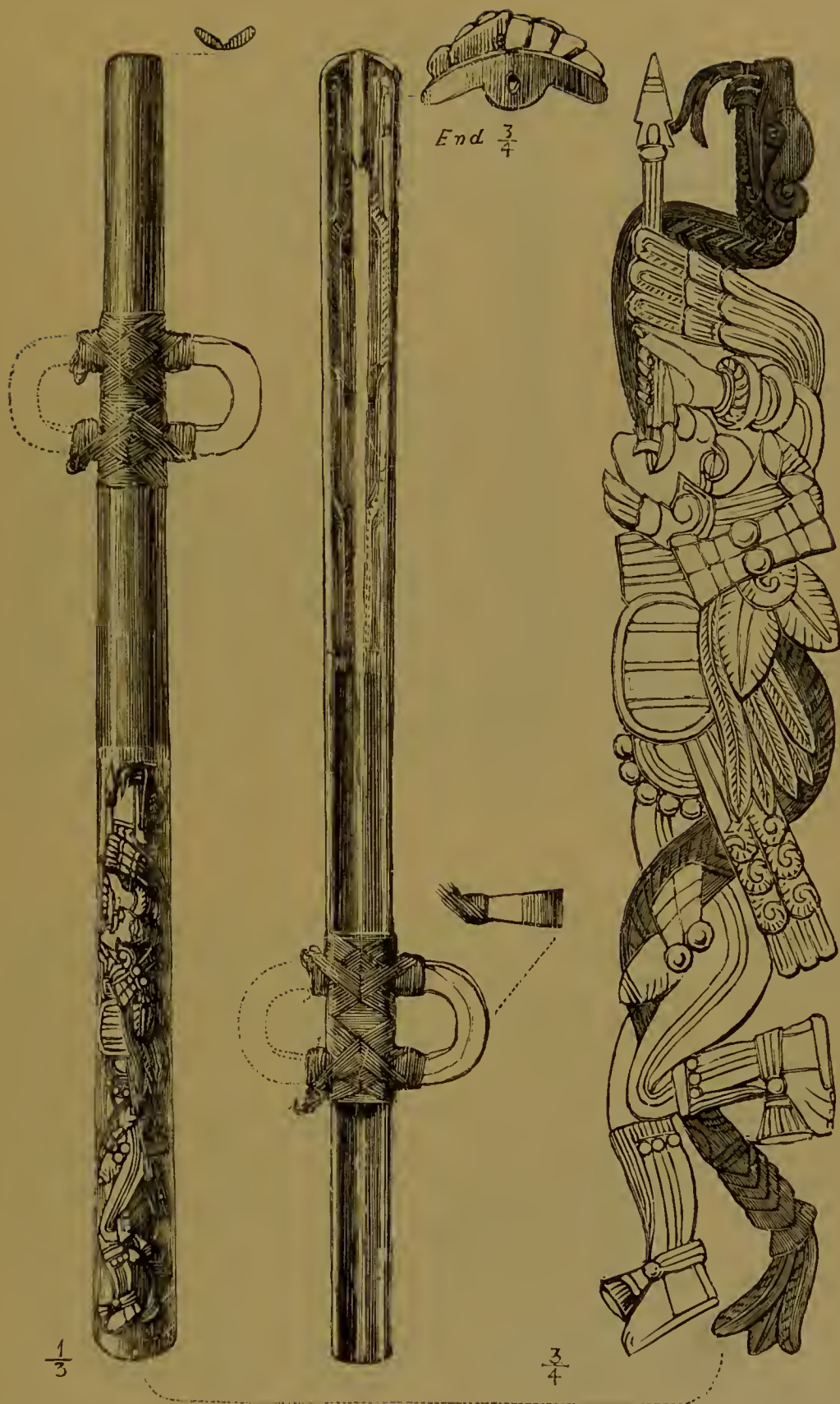


FIG. 23. MEXICO. Wooden spear-thrower, with shell finger-loops.



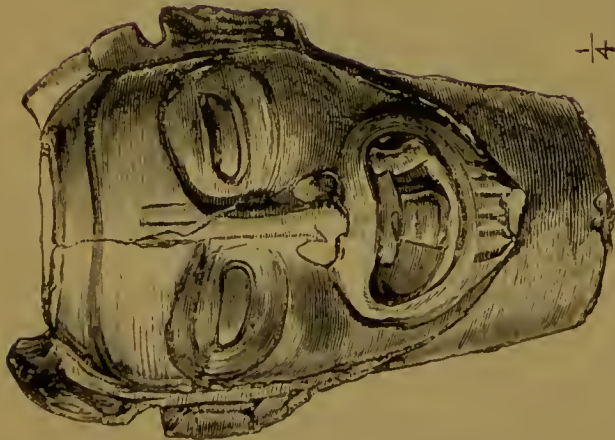


Fig. 24. Mexico. Pottery vase in form of grotesque head; found near Tehuantepec.

$\frac{1}{4}$



Fig. 26. SAN SALVADOR. Stone metalt for grinding maize.

$\frac{1}{6}$



*Section*

Fig. 25. SAN SALVADOR. Stone axe.

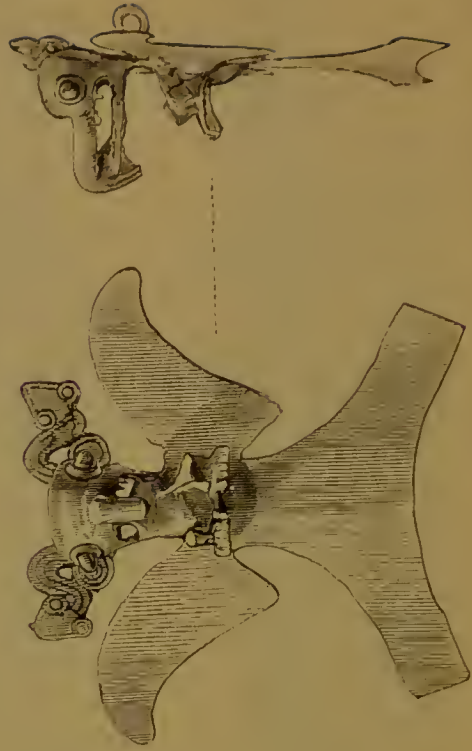


Fig. 27. Costa Rica. Gold ornament in the form of a bird.

$\frac{1}{2}$





*a*

*b*

*c*



*d*



*e*



*f*



*g*



A characteristic series of pottery from Nicaragua is shown in case 11, and embraces two types, one in dark brown ware with incised and moulded decoration, the other covered with a white slip on which designs have been painted, and further ornamented in many cases with grotesque features in relief. Like the Mexicans, the people of Central America were mainly agriculturists, and maize was their most important food-plant. Examples of the carved stone slabs, called *metatl*, on which they ground the grain, are exhibited in case 10 and the end of case B (fig. 26); while two fine stone vases from the Mosquito Coast are shown over cases 24, 25, and 26, 27.

Cases 12-13 contain a number of vases from Costa Rica, many of them with painted designs on a creamy slip. These exhibit great variety of form, and the decoration, moulded and painted, is almost invariably taken from the animal world, though often so conventionalized as to be difficult

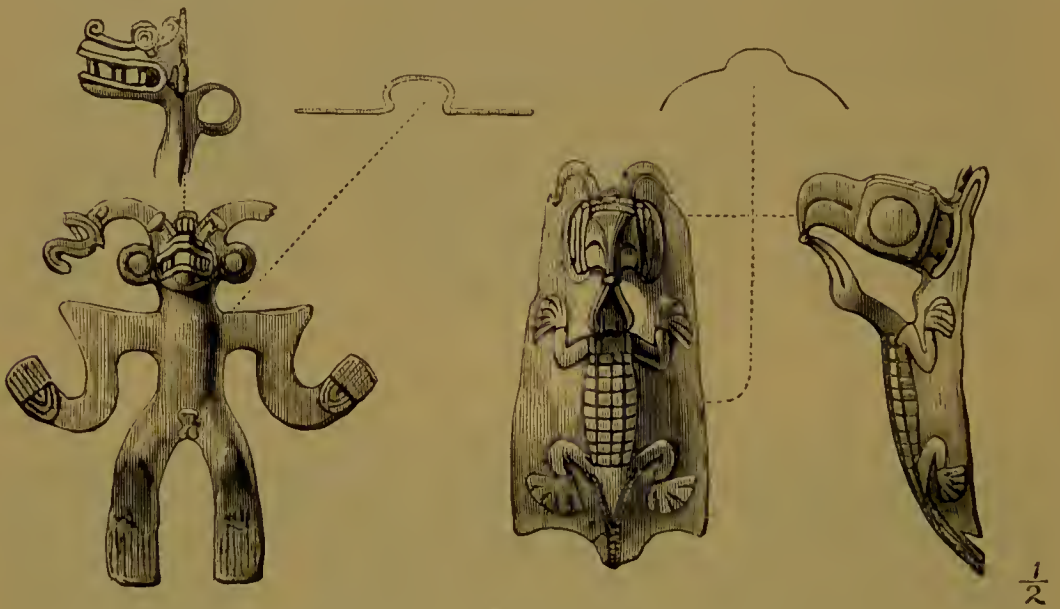


FIG. 28. COSTA RICA. Gold ornaments.

of recognition. The pottery exhibited comes chiefly from two sites, one on the Atlantic shore, in the neighbourhood of San Isidro, the other on the Pacific coast, near Terraba. In the lower part of case 12 is exhibited a characteristic series of stone seats and other carvings also from Costa Rica, while a number of interesting gold objects, chiefly pendants in the form of birds, from Costa Rica and Panama (figs. 27 and 28) is exhibited in the Room of Gold Ornaments and Gems.



## SOUTH AMERICA.

THE continent of South America can be divided geographically into three principal areas, which are distinguished respectively by three main types of culture. The first area includes the Andean highlands and the narrow strip of coastland on the west, extending from Colombia to Patagonia. The second comprises the open plains, or Pampas, of northern Argentina and the sterile plateaux of Patagonia east of the Andes. The third and largest, constituted by Brazil, the Guianas, and a great part of Venezuela, is for the most part thickly forested.

The physical conformation has an important bearing upon the culture-history of the continent. The great bulk of South America lies within the tropics, but, in the Andean region, the high elevation of the plateaux confined between the twin mountain-ranges compensates for the latitude, and the climate is temperate or even cold; while on the west coast south of Guayaquil the extreme dryness renders the heat supportable. The climate of the Pampas is temperate and healthy, and that of Patagonia cold and invigorating; but in the forested area the great heat, allied to an excessive moisture, is far more conducive to vegetable than to human development. The only region, therefore, favourable to the evolution of an advanced type of culture was that of the Andes, where the fertile valleys gave scope for agricultural development. The Pampas, though healthy, were sterile, and their inhabitants were forced to live as nomadic hunters; while in the forest were found hunting tribes living under very primitive conditions, some of them ignorant even of pottery.

Between the culture of the forest and that of the Andes, there was little overlapping, but the vigorous nomads of the Pampas had in early times succeeded in dominating that portion of the Andes which bordered their region, together with the coast beyond; at a later date they were able to repulse the attack of the most advanced and highly-organized of all the Andean states, and to maintain their independence even against the Spaniards.

Of the antiquity of man in South America little can be said save that he was there in quaternary times, but no remains have been found which can definitely be referred to a date prior to the latter half of that period. Some of these remains have been found associated with those of giant sloths and armadillos, which in the Old World are characteristic of the pleistocene period; but the remarkable freshness of the animal remains (some of which may be seen at South Kensington) has given rise to the supposition





FIG. 29. SOUTH AMERICA.



that in South America the quaternary fauna may have lingered on into post-pleistocene times. Quantities of stone implements, closely corresponding in type to the neolithic implements of Europe, are found throughout Patagonia, and in one locality, beneath a stratum containing implements of the neolithic type, others have been discovered corresponding in form to the palaeoliths of St. Acheul and Le Moustier, specimens of which may be seen in the Prehistoric Room.

### THE ANDEAN REGION.

The Andean region may conveniently be divided into four areas, corresponding respectively to the modern states of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru (including Bolivia and part of Chile), and the north-western provinces of the Argentine Republic. In each of the first three an antithesis will be found to exist between the cultures characteristic respectively of the coast and of the actual highlands. Of these areas, Colombia stands by itself, but Ecuador and north-west Argentina had, at the time of the Spanish conquest, fallen under the influence of their more powerful neighbour. This was the state of the Peruvian Inca, who had occupied the Cuzco valley in early times, and had gradually built up an empire which extended eventually from the river Ancasmayu in north Ecuador to the river Maule in Chile and the Argentine province of Tucuman.

### COLOMBIA.

Remains of archaeological interest from Colombia are derived almost entirely from the high ground bordering the valleys of the Cauca and Magdalena rivers. Here alone were found tribes who had made any advance in culture, the rest of the area being peopled by savage tribes of head-hunters, living under very primitive conditions, of whom little or nothing is known. The most interesting section of the population is the small group of tribes, collectively known as Chibcha, who inhabited the Cundinamarca plateau, since not only were they the most advanced politically speaking, but their history for many years prior to the Spanish conquest has survived in continuous tradition. They were ruled by a number of independent over-lords, each of whom held authority over as many district chiefs as he could control; and Chibcha history, as we know it, centres in the successful attempt of the chiefs of Bogotá to win independence from their former over-lords of Tunja, and in the subsequent wars which, but for the arrival of the Spanish conquerors, might have resulted in the establishment of an empire with Bogotá at its head. Less advanced politically than the Chibcha, but better craftsmen, were the Quimbaya, inhabitants of the country around Cartago, and the people of Antioquia; a fourth, but inferior, culture-centre can be distinguished in the neighbourhood of Popayan. The last district, however, is unrepresented in the Museum collection.



While, as far as their implements were concerned, the Colombians were living in the stone age (for specimens of stone axes see case C), they were skilful workers of gold and copper. Fine specimens of the hammered work of the Quimbaya and Antioquians, in the shape of head-pieces and breast-plates, can be seen in the Room of Gold Ornaments and Gems, while in case D (exhibition-drawer 6) is a stone carved in relief which served as a die for embossed work. The characteristic gold-work of the Chibcha (fig. 30) is exhibited in the same room, and consists of small flat figures with the details apparently in soldered wire; their appearance, however, is deceptive, since in many, if not all, cases they were cast solid.

Examples of pottery vases are shown in case 14, and in this respect also the inferiority of the Chibcha, as compared with the tribes of the

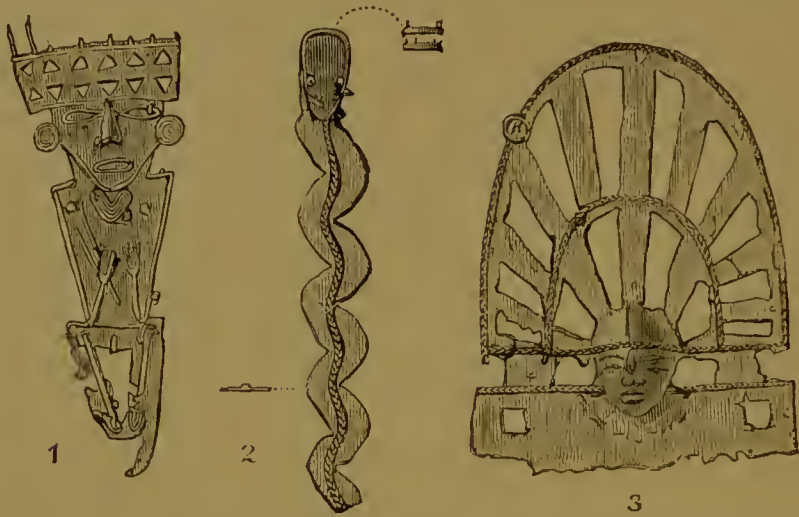


FIG. 30. COLOMBIA. 1, 2, Gold figures; 3, Copper gilt. Chibcha.

Cauca valley, is apparent. Other interesting objects of pottery in the exhibition-drawers in case D comprise spindle-whorls used in the manufacture of cotton thread from which garments were woven, and stamps with which painted decoration was applied to the clothing or persons of the Colombian tribes.

Very little is known of the religion of the Colombians except that of the Chibcha. The latter revered a number of gods, presiding over agriculture, weaving, and other occupations; but the worship of the powers of nature, the sun, moon, mountains, rocks, and lakes, was of paramount importance. The lake of Guatabita was regarded as especially sacred: pilgrimages were made to it at stated seasons, and quantities of gold and emeralds were cast into it, or buried in pottery receptacles on the banks (see case 14). From this neighbourhood come the stone and amber beads exhibited in drawer 1 in case D. The stories of El Dorado, based on certain ceremonies performed on this lake, gave great impetus to the early exploration of this continent.



## ECUADOR.

Until further exploration has taken place it is difficult to speak with certainty about the culture of the Ecuadorian highlands. The country was added to the Inca empire a couple of generations before the Spanish conquest, and, with the exception of the coast, had become thoroughly permeated with Inca culture. In fact Quito, the capital of the local ruler, rose almost immediately to be the second city in the Inca realm. Originally this neighbourhood had been the home of a people calling themselves Quito, who were conquered by a tribe, named Cara, coming from the coast.

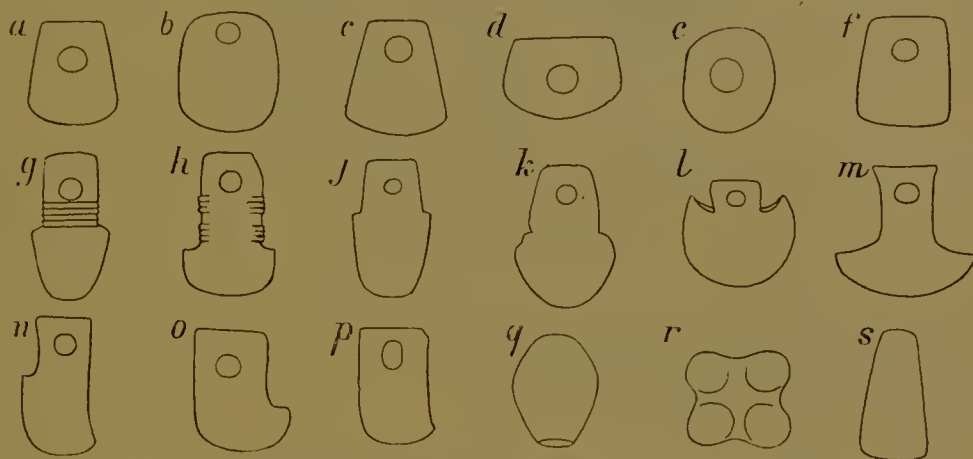


FIG. 31. ECUADOR. Stone axe-blades from the highlands.

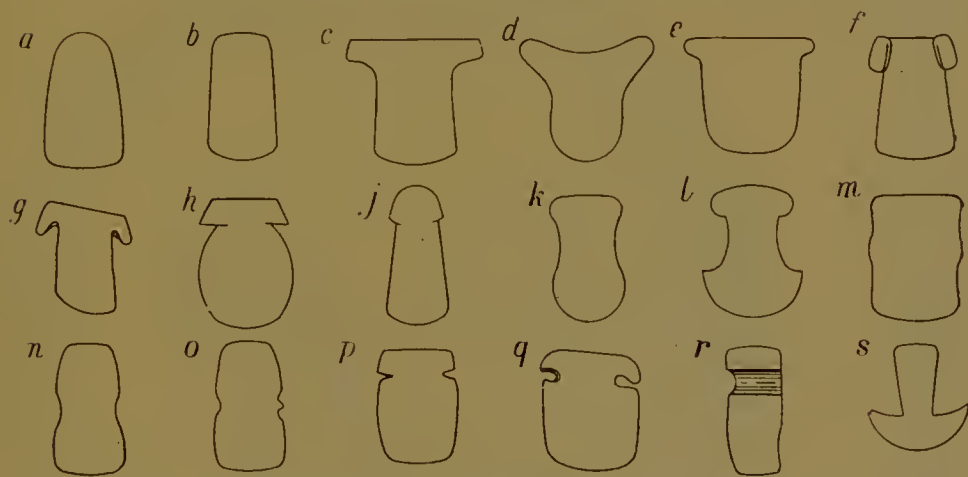


FIG. 32. ECUADOR. Stone axe-blades from the highlands.

The Cara rulers, called Seyri, were able by diplomatic means to add the Riobamba district, inhabited by the Puruha, to their newly-acquired kingdom; and subsequently exercised a loose control over the Cañari and Palta tribes further south. Much of the pottery obtained from the Ecuadorian highlands (cases 15 and 16) shows distinct Inca influence both in design and ornament, though in the northern provinces it bears a close resemblance to that of southern Colombia. The colours are always sombre, and moulded ornament is not common; representations of the human figure are occasionally seen, but are very poor. The stone implements, however, of which a fine series is exhibited in case C, are typical of the





FIG. 33. ECUADOR. Portion of skull with teeth inlaid with gold, Atacames ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ).



$\frac{1}{4}$

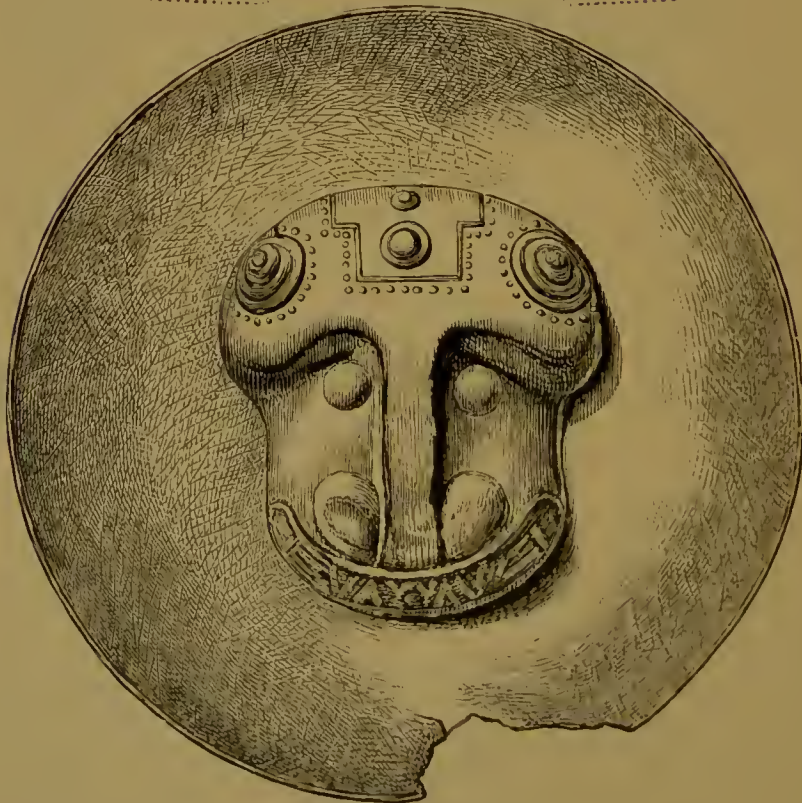


FIG. 34. ECUADOR. Copper embossed disk.



region (figs. 31 and 32), as are the bronze axes from Cuenca, some of them heavy and intended for serious work, others light and covered with gold leaf and probably intended for ceremonial purposes (drawers in case D). Smaller objects of stone are the studs worn in the lip (drawer 2, case D), and the hooks formerly attached to the ends of the wooden spear-throwers which were used by the tribes of Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. On the southern Ecuadorian coast a different culture existed, but the

Museum collection is very poor in pottery from this district, which in modelling and coloured ornamentation far surpasses that of the highlands. Stone implements are rare, but in the district of Manabi remains of stone buildings and carved stone slabs are found; from the same region come the remarkable stone seats, two of which may be seen on the landing outside the American Room. With this district are associated certain interesting copper disks, possibly breast-plates, with large grotesque faces embossed in the centre (see case 16 and fig. 34). The beautiful gold disk with human face in high relief shown in the Room of Gold Ornaments and Gems probably comes from this neighbourhood. From the coast also comes

the facial portion of a skull in case C (fig. 33), having the teeth inlaid with gold, which was found with the huge stone axe exhibited beside it.



FIG. 35. PERU. Designs from pottery in the Truxillo style; *a-c* painted, *d* moulded.

#### PERU.

At the time of the conquest the Spaniards found a great empire extending from the Ancasmayu river in Ecuador to the Maule river in Chile, and the Argentine province of Tucuman, and including the coast and highlands of Peru and the plateau of Bolivia. This empire was ruled by a tribe, calling themselves Inca, who, according to their traditions, came from the south and seized the Cuzco valley about thirteen generations before the Spanish conquest. At this time the Peruvian tribes seem politically



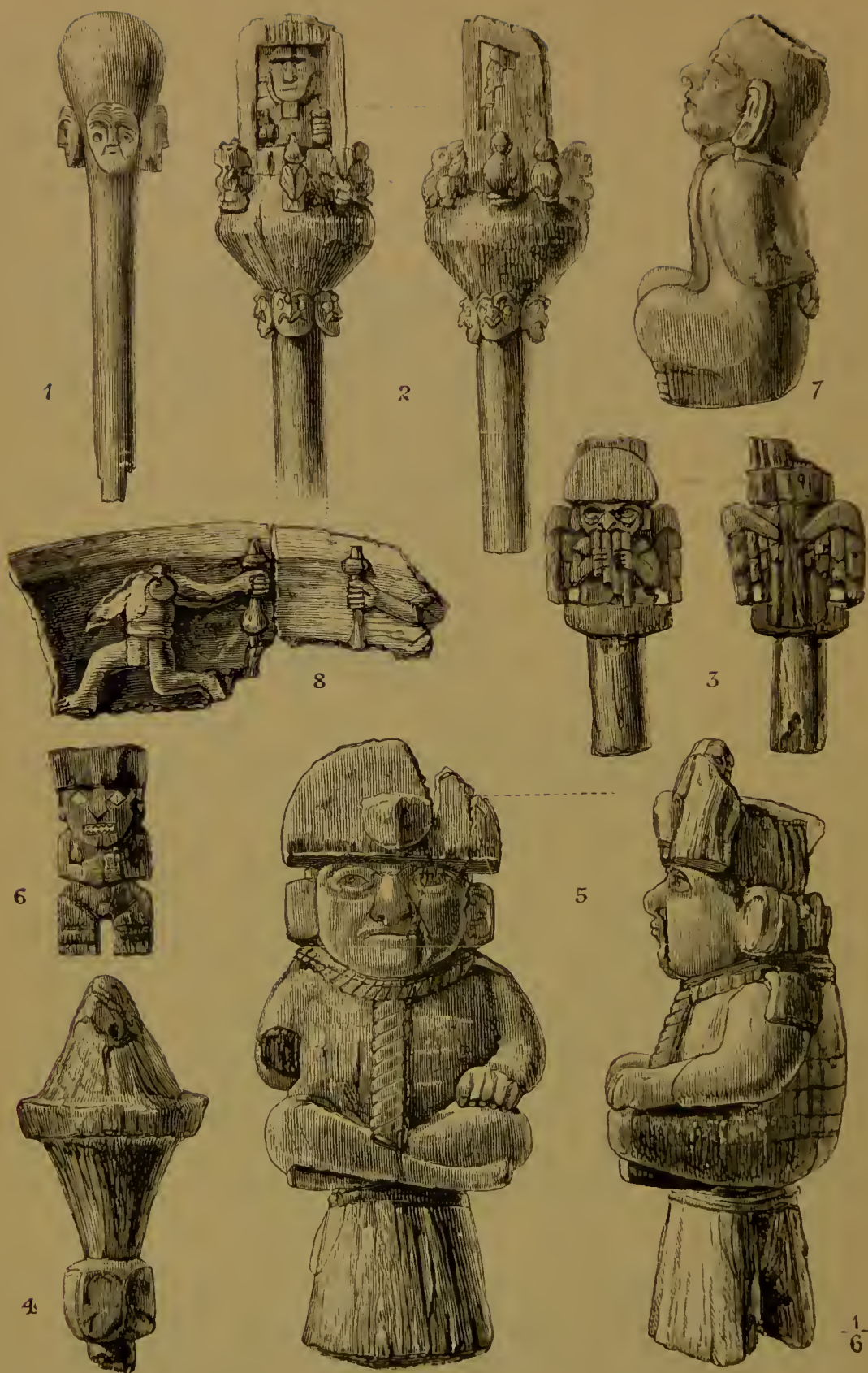


FIG. 36. PERU. 1-7, Carvings in wood : 8. Pottery fragment.  
From the Macabi Islands.





*a*



*b*



*c*



*d*

PLATE VII. PERU. *a.* Quipus ( $\frac{1}{6}$ ). *b.* Wooden figure, Macabi Islands ( $\frac{1}{5}$ ). *c.* Silver cup, Truxillo ( $\frac{3}{7}$ ). *d.* Fragment of stone cup, Tiahuanaco ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ).



to have resembled the Chibcha. The Inca formed a small confederation, as the Cara rulers in Ecuador, and under a succession of good rulers rapidly extended their sway, absorbing several other similar confederations. The system by which the empire was governed is of great interest; the life of the people was regulated by an elaborate system of rules, which were enforced by a veritable army of inspectors. Personal property was



FIG. 37. CHILE.  
Bone fishhook, Huasco.

FIG. 38. PERU. Black pottery, coastal districts.

practically non-existent, and the products of united labour were distributed by the state among the population. The Inca tribe, now become a class, filled the higher offices of the huge bureaucracy by which the empire was governed, and the ruler, known as Sapa Inca ('Only Inca'), was paid divine honours. The Inca claimed divine descent from the Sun, and imposed their family sun-worship as a state religion upon all their subjects; sun-worship was already in vogue sporadically throughout the whole Andean region up to Colombia, but the local and family gods were in many



cases lakes, rocks, or animals, and the worship of these minor deities still continued to be of paramount local importance even after the imposition of the sun-cult. Besides the deities of this nature, most of the Peruvians, or at any rate the southern tribes, recognized a supreme sky-god, called by the Inca *Uiracocha*; but though hymns were sung to him, no offerings were made, since the whole world was regarded as his.

The worship of ancestors was important; the bodies of the dead were preserved in mummy form (case K), in the highlands in caves, on the coast in cemeteries, which sometimes took the form of huge brick pyramids, and frequent offerings were made to them. The people of the coast were called Yunca by the Inca; here the inhabitants of the fertile valleys were grouped in five confederations, of which the most powerful had its centre at Truxillo and was ruled by a chief of the name or title of Chimu. Another of great importance centred round Pachacamac, where was a famous temple to the creator-god of the coast, afterwards identified with the Inca creator-god, Pachacamac. Pilgrimages were made to this shrine from all over Peru.

But in the Peruvian highlands exist remains earlier than those of the Inca, as well as traditions of an earlier empire. At Tiahuanaco on the south shore of Lake Titicaca are certain very remarkable megalithic remains, including a large number of stone blocks, some of great size, cut with extraordinary accuracy (see the wooden models to scale in case D), and monolithic gateways

hewn from solid stone and carved with elaborate designs (see the model in case 16). Associated with these early remains is a type of red pottery, often in beaker form, decorated with painted designs of a bold and vigorous, if somewhat conventionalized, character (see case 17). The Tiahuanaco style of decoration, of which the carved stone cup, Pl. VII. *d*, affords a good example, penetrated to the coast, even as far north as Truxillo, and it is possible that the rulers of this early inland empire extended their power as far as the sea. But before the coast people had come into contact with the inland art they were making pottery which, from an artistic point of view, is superior to any other in America. Two main varieties existed, one exemplified by the Truxillo ware, the other by the pottery of Nasca. The latter is distinguished by polychrome painted decoration (case 27), and a fine series of the former is exhibited in cases 18-26. Both moulded and painted decoration are employed, and an excellent idea of the appearance, dress, and habits of the early coast-dwellers can be



FIG. 39. PERU. Pottery vase of Inca type.

$\frac{1}{4}$



obtained from their pottery (Pls. VIII and IX). The peculiar wooden carvings in case 20 found buried deep in guano in the Macabi Islands also belong to the early culture of the coast (Pl. VII. *e* and fig. 36). But these are not the earliest remains in this region: great shell-mounds are found containing

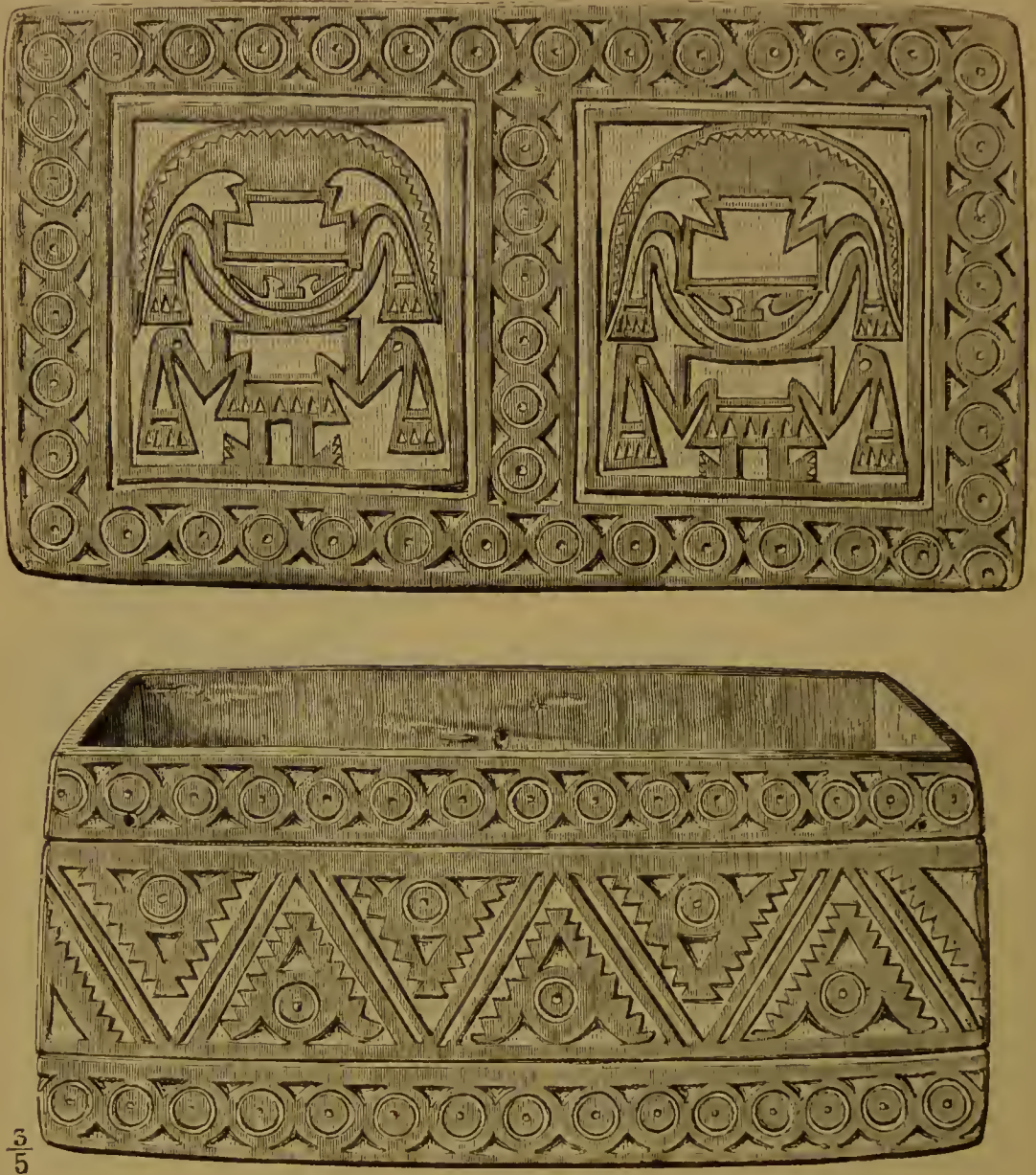


FIG. 40. PERU. Wooden casket, Lima.

the rude stone and bone implements and pottery of a vanished population, who probably retreated southward before the advance of more civilized immigrants, and are represented to-day by the Alacaluf of Fuegia: the objects from Huaseo in Chile, in the exhibition-drawers of case G. may be taken as typical of this people (fig. 37). The black ware (fig. 38), of which specimens are exhibited in case K, was the latest on the coast, and immediately preceded the Inca conquest, being found associated with undoubted Inca remains. The Inca pottery, though in many cases exceedingly





*a*



*b*



*c*



*d*

PLATE VIII. PERU. Pottery from the coast region of Truxillo; early type.  
(*a.*  $\frac{1}{3}$ . *b.*  $\frac{1}{3}$ . *c.*  $\frac{1}{3}$ . *d.*  $\frac{1}{5}$ .)



graceful in shape, is less elaborately decorated and always sombre in colour. Especially typical is the pattern shown in fig. 39, and the plates in case 17.

The same remark applies to textiles, a selection of which is shown in case H. The majority of these come from the coast, only the fewer dark-coloured specimens being of Inca workmanship. Many of the textiles are actual tapestry, and were worked with the needles shown in the exhibition-drawers of case G, but the loom was known and used, as may be seen from the specimen in case 18. Cloth was sometimes ornamented with feather-work (see case 16).

Stone was worked with great ability by the inland tribes, and their buildings, though less ornamental than those of the Maya, exhibited far greater skill. Not only could the Peruvian mason handle larger masses of stone with greater facility, but he understood the principle of bonding the corners of buildings. Of smaller objects of stone, attention may be called to the magnificent mortar, ornamented with snakes in relief, exhibited on the landing, and the fragment of a stone cup, carved in the Tiahuanaco style, in case D (Pl. VII. *d*).



FIG. 41. PERU. Bone spatula carved and inlaid with turquoise and pyrites, Santa Valley, near Truxillo.

Copper, gold, and silver were known to all the Peruvians except the prehistoric inhabitants of the coast. Copper, containing a varying but slight percentage (? natural) of tin, was used to make spades, chisels, axes, club-heads, and pins for dresses (for examples see case D and the exhibition-drawers in case G). The coast people were very skilful metal-workers, and their silver goblets, apparently beaten from a single sheet of metal, are of great technical interest (see case 17 and Pl. VII. *c*).

It is remarkable that the Peruvians, advanced as they were politically and culturally, had no form of writing. The accounts of their empire, and even, it is said, historical events, were recorded on knotted cords called *quipus*, one of which is exhibited in case D (Pl. VII. *a*).

It is not easy, in the present condition of our knowledge, to discriminate, except on broad lines, between the various manifestations of Peruvian culture. The Inca, to minimize the danger of revolt, were, like the ancient monarchs of Asia, in the habit of deporting large numbers of the inhabitants of a newly-conquered province to remote districts: furthermore they transported very many of the coast artisans to Cuzco, so that the capital might reap the benefit of their skill. Hence has arisen considerable cultural confusion, which it is by no means easy to disentangle.

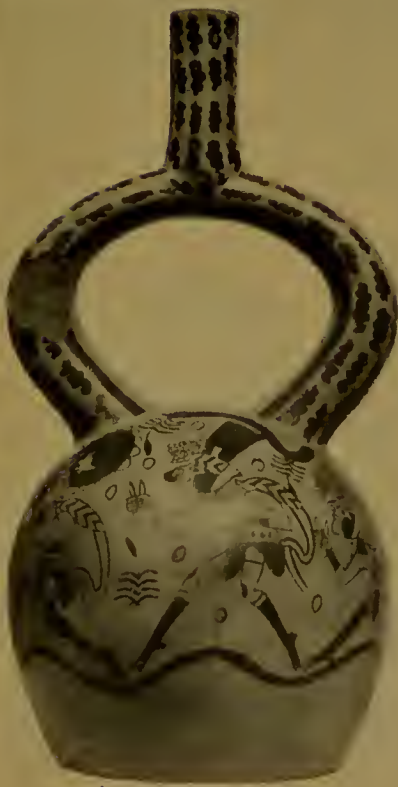




*a*



*b*



*c*



*d*



## NORTH-WEST ARGENTINA.

The Andean provinces of the Argentine Republic, exclusive of the sterile plateaux of Atacama and Jujuy, are distinguished by a culture, evidently owing much to Peru, which is known as Diaguite or Calchaqui. The

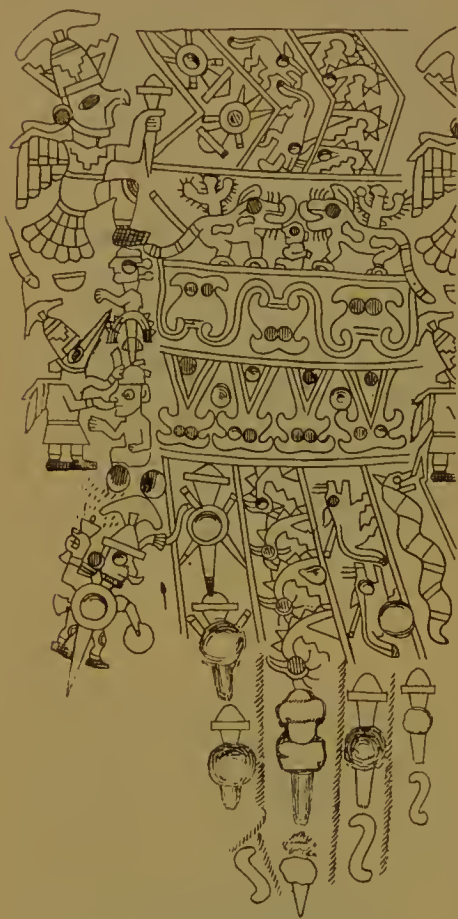


FIG. 42. Design on Fig. 41.

pottery of this region is good and of great interest, but the series in the Museum is small. Two main varieties may be distinguished, one consisting of the black engraved ware (see case 28), the other ornamented with fine polychrome designs. Whole cemeteries have been discovered in which the bodies of infants have been buried enclosed in large vases of the latter variety. Of copper objects two are worth mention, a ceremonial axe of well-known type, and a large so-called 'breast-plate' (see case G). Finer engraved plaques also occur in this district, one of which is represented by a cast in the same case.

The two stone mortars in the end of case G, which come from the same region, are worthy of notice.

The plateaux of Atacama and Jujuy were the seat of a lower culture, having affinities with that of the Chilean coast (see remains from Taltal and Huasco in exhibition-drawers, case G).

## THE SOUTH AMERICAN PLAINS.

The Museum possesses few specimens illustrating the culture of the nomad inhabitants of the Pampas and Patagonia. The stone implements of this area have already been noticed, but it may be added that the *bolas*, known also in southern Peru, is characteristic of the Pampas tribes. This is a missile weapon, consisting of a hide thong, to each end of which is attached a stone ball, one larger than the other. The smaller was held in the hand, and the other whirled round the head, and the whole appliance launched in the direction of the game which it was desired to secure. From the Pampas tribes the *bolas* spread among the Patagonians (Tehuelche) and Chileans, and also northwards through Buenos Aires into Brazil. A typical *bolas* is exhibited in case 85 of the Ethnographical Gallery, and *bolas* stones in case G. Rude pottery with impressed designs is found in Buenos Aires.





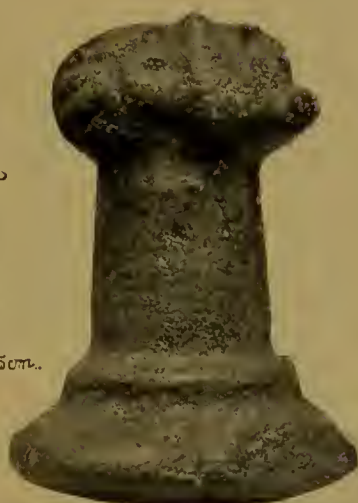
*a*



*b*



*c*



*d*



*e*



*f*



*g*

PLATE X. WEST INDIES. Pestles. *c* and *e*. Probably Jamaica. *d*. San Domingo. *f*. Jamaica. *g*. Probably Jamaica.



## BRAZIL.

The archaeology of Brazil is poorly represented in this collection. This vast area was peopled by tribes of four linguistic stocks, Carib, Arawak, Tupi-Guarani, and Ges, the first two mainly in the northern half, the third in the south, and the fourth in the east, though much intermingling has taken place owing to migration.

The most interesting remains (probably Arawak) occur in the Amazon delta, where fine painted and engraved pottery is found (none in the Museum), and in the shell-mounds (*sambaqui*) of the coast, where stone 'palettes' carved in the form of fish and other stone objects have been discovered. A few rude stone axes from the coast are shown in case G, together with a fine polished specimen of a type characteristic of northern Brazil. An interesting feature of this area is the prevalence of urn-burial; in some cases the body has been deposited in the urn entire, in other cases the flesh has first been removed from the bones. Two burial urns from Para are exhibited above cases 27-8 and in the end of case F. In south Brazil the pottery is akin to that of Buenos Aires, mentioned above, and traces of Pampean influence are not wanting.

Of ancient Guiana and Venezuela very little is known; a few stone axes are exhibited in case C.



FIG. 43. WEST INDIES. Wooden idol.





PLATE XI. WEST INDIES. Wooden 'table' from Jamaica.



## THE WEST INDIES.

The West Indies, which form an irregular chain of islands between Venezuela and Florida, belong from the zoological, botanical, and ethnological points of view to the South American continent. It seems probable that in early times they had been colonized by primitive Arawak tribes, who made their way from island to island. Later the path of the Arawak



FIG. 44. WEST INDIES. Carved stone axes. Probably San Domingo.

was followed by the fiercer Carib, who had succeeded in exterminating their predecessors throughout the Lesser Antilles, and had begun to exert an influence upon the eastern end of Porto Rico, when their progress was stopped by the arrival of the Spaniards. The long strife between the Carib and Arawak had not failed to exert an influence upon the former, since they had been in the habit of reserving the Arawak women as wives, and consequently their culture had become somewhat modified since their departure from the South American continent.

Both Carib and Arawak were living in an age of stone, but they handled their material with considerable facility; all their implements were ground, and not a single chipped implement without grinding has been found. Characteristic of the Carib are the large axe-blades, sometimes





FIG. 45. WEST INDIES. Monolithic stone axe.



FIG. 46. WEST INDIES. Wooden 'table' representing bird and tortoise.

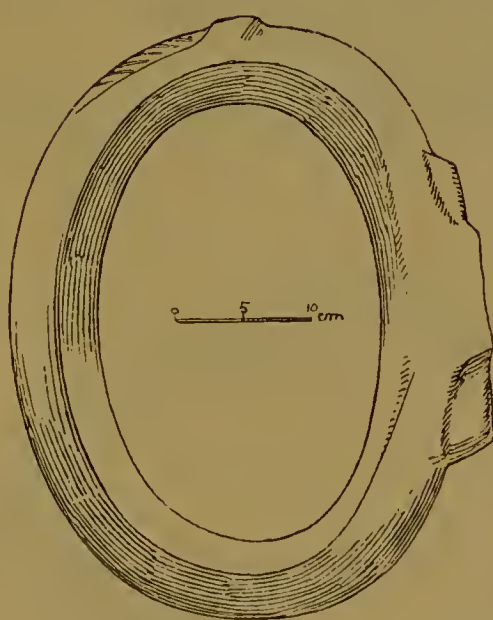


FIG. 47. WEST INDIES. Stone 'collar'; heavy type.





spatulate in shape, sometimes with projections resembling the beaks of birds at the butt, of which a good series is exhibited in case 29. Smaller, but often of better quality, were the axes of the Arawak, the specimens from Jamaica (case F) exhibiting remarkable polish and symmetry. The axes, usually from San Domingo, with human features carved in relief (fig. 44), and the monolithic carvings representing a hafted axe, of which the Museum possesses one magnificent specimen (fig. 45), are the most curious of all. The island of Barbados is entirely lacking in stone from which implements could be manufactured, but the deficiency was supplied by clam-shells, from which celts were carved (case F). The few stone implements which are found on this island must have been imported. Of the other stone implements the carved pestles from the Greater Antilles



FIG. 48. WEST INDIES. Wooden seat, San Domingo.

(case F and Pl. X) are worthy of attention. The religion of the islanders was a combined nature-worship and fetishism; two fine wooden idols from Jamaica, inlaid with shell, are exhibited over cases 28 and 29, while two 'tables', probably used for the reception of offerings, can be seen over case 30 (fig. 46) and in the end of case F (Pl. XI). The peculiar 'three-pointed stones', characteristic of Porto Rico and part of San Domingo (Pl. XII. *a* and *b*), were probably also idols or fetishes (case F), and again the remarkable stone 'collars' in case 29 (Pl. XII. *c-f*) and the end of table-case F (fig. 47). These stone collars, found principally in Porto Rico, though also in San Domingo and occasionally in the Lesser Antilles, conform to two main types, heavy and light. They are evidently 'translations' into stone of certain objects originally made of wood, a fact which is most clearly shown in the specimen in Pl. XII. *c* and *d*. It is possible that they may be connected with tree-worship, which is known to have been practised by the islanders. Pottery is found throughout the Antilles: the ware is rather thick and heavy, and not of very good quality. The vessels are ornamented with engraved designs and moulded ornament chiefly in the form of grotesque heads. A few fragments are exhibited in case F.



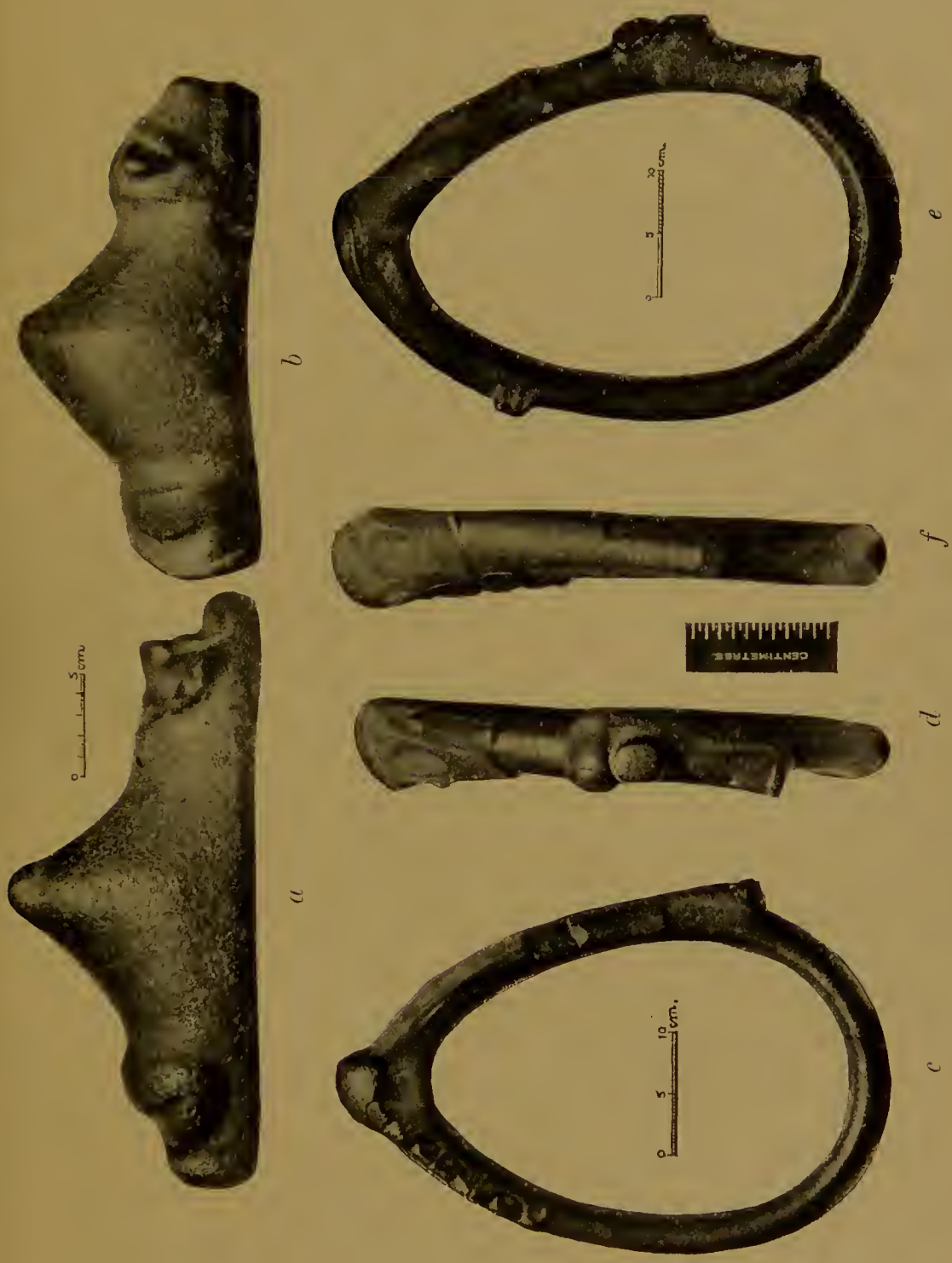


PLATE XII. WEST INDIES. *a* and *b*. 'Three-pointed stones'. *c-e*. Stone 'collars'.























